

Message Text

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PAGE 01 EC BRU 07363 192342Z

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6175

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION OECD PARIS

UNCLAS EC BRUSSELS 7363

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, EEC

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS WITH EC COMMISSION

REF: EC A-354

1. SUMMARY. ON DECEMBER 17, VIRGINIA KNAUER, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, MET WITH EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT CARLO SCARASCIA-MUGNOZZA AND OFFICIALS OF THE EC COMMISSION'S DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND CONSUMER PROTECTION. MRS. KNAUER WAS ACCOMPANIED BY BABRBARA FRANKLIN, VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSUMER PRODUCTS SAFETY COMMISSION. SCARASCIA-MUGNOZZA MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF EXTENDING US-EC COOPERATION IN MATTERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT
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PAGE 02 EC BRU 07363 192342Z

(FOR WHICH HE IS ALSO RESPONSIBLE) TO THE FIELD OF CONSUMER

AFFAIRS HE SUGGESTED THIS BE THE SUBJECT OF FURTHER DISCUSSION DURING HIS VISIT TO THE US IN MAY OR JUNE 1974. END SUMMARY.

2. THE DECEMBER 17 KNAUER-FRANKLIN DISCUSSIONS WITH SCARASCIA-MUGNOZZA AND KEY EC COMMISSION CONSUMER EXPERTS WERE HIGHLY CONSTRUCTIVE AND FORMED A SOUND BASIS FOR THE POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF US-EC INFORMAL CONTACTS AND COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS. DURING THE DISCUSSION, THE DESIRABILITY OF ESTABLISHING A TWO WAY FLOW OF INFORMATION ON CONSUMER DEVELOPMENTS IN THE US AND COMMON MARKET COUNTRIES WAS EMPHASIZED. THE COMMISSION OFFICIALS WERE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CONSUMER PRODUCTS SAFETY COMMISSION DESCRIBED BY MRS. FRANKLIN AND REQUESTED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON US ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF FORMULATING AND ENFORCING STANDARDS.

3. SCARASCIA-MUGNOZZA TOLD MRS. KNAUER THAT THE COMMUNITY HAS NOT AS YET MOVED VERY FAR IN THE CONSUMER PROTECTION FIELD. IT IS, NEVERTHELESS, CONSIDERED A PRIORITY AREA BY THE EC COMMISSION WHICH HAS DRAWN UP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A CONSUMER ACTION PROGRAM. HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD PRESENT THESE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON DECEMBER 18 FOR AN INITIAL COUNCIL DISCUSSION. (HE SUBSEQUENTLY REPORTED TO THE COUNCIL WHICH TOOK NOTE OF SCARASCIA-MUGNOZZA'S REPORT AND INSTRUCTED THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES TO STUDY THE COMMISSION'S PROGRAM WITH A VIEW TO THE COUNCIL'S REACHING A DECISION ON THE MATTER BY MID-1974.)

4. SCARASCIA-MUGNOZZA SAID HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING MRS. KNAUER AGAIN IN WASHINGTON DURING HIS VISIT TO THE US IN MAY OR JUNE TO DISCUSS ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS (EC BRUSSELS 6113). HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT DISCUSSIONS ON ESTABLISHING CLOSER US-EC COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF CONSUMER PROTECTION BE INCLUDED IN HIS WASHINGTON PROGRAM AT THAT TIME.
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